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Politics of pleasure... from a fucking expert

by Heather MacKay

There are things you don't know. And then there are things you don't know you don't know.

Can a contracting vagina snap little finger bones? Can a dental dam stretch securely from clitoris to anus? What is a 'fuckerware' party and how can we get one started in say... Montréal?

The surest and simplest route to answers for these questions and others can be got through a lesbian, according to Susie Bright, or 'Susie Sexpert', as she's better known.

Bright, editor of *On Our Backs* magazine, takes her road show on tour, toting a wide and wild range of sexual accoutrements: toys, latex this, latex that, bodies, videos and big screens. Last week she was in Montréal to promote her new book, *Susie Sexpert's Lesbian Sex World*.

"Lesbians are the fucking experts - the experts on fucking," said Bright.

She attributes the health and confidence of the movement to the grassroots approach lesbians have been forced to take by the absence of a professional lesbian erotica. "We've been getting very brazen and bold."

"There was this idea that if people knew what we were doing we'd be vulnerable," said Susie. Now, she said, she expects a growth in the number of people stopping women on the street to say, "I realize you're a lesbian and you know everything about sex."

Susie admitted owning "many pairs of 'earth shoes' and Birkenstocks" back in the days when being a lesbian "meant saying 'Fuck you' to Revlon." But Bright says things were destined to change. "Inside I was wearing a very low-cut dress." Now she wears it on the outside, in red.

Gay men have come to understand gender crossing from the pre-Stonewall drag days to

the present, according to Bright. Straights can trace their understanding of gender to the stone age, but lesbians are still forging what will become the heritage of lesbian gender-fuck.

Bright described an anti-censorship concert she attended along with Ice T, Iggy Pop, and others hit by the 'moral' minority. A man told a story of generation gaps, encouraging the audience to talk reason with their Dads. But if Dad still refuses to listen, the man said, tell him, 'Suck my dick.'

The audience joined in a chorus repeating the words. "And you know who was saying it the loudest," said Susie, "It was the young girls. We've got the biggest dick. We've had it all along. It's like we turn ourselves inside out to hide it."

Sexuality is the artist's domain in the next decade. We're going to do it all night and write it, paint it, and video tape it all day.
- Susie Bright

So tell me...

Bright calls her educative activities "sexual social work." She spoke gently, leaning slightly forward, "I know it's really embarrassing to talk about sex." The listener expected some stilted social theory or psychological analysis. Wrong, very wrong.

The voice deepened, Susie leaned further forward, "So why don't you tell me what turns you on."

Susie's other Sex Ed methods include various incarnations of her road show. In Seattle, she pulled off a smashingly successful 'fist fucking' workshop with 60 women.

On another occasion, Susie brought her



female ejaculation video to 1500 people, of which only ten were men. The only screen available was 15 feet high, giving a view of female ejaculation like no other. Susie said a man came up to her afterward, saying "I didn't know you came more than we did."

"When people ask me about the sex wars, I say we won, but there's still a lot of sticky battles ahead," said Bright, referring to the right wing, fundamentalist movements that slow down the pace of progress. "I want to go 90 miles an hour," she said. She also noted the objections of some older, hard-line feminists to a politics of pleasure, but said it's the sensible next step.

Bright took another step when she had a baby four months ago. Although she chose to "party" into pregnancy, she said women should be free to choose their method, describing one turkey baster insemination exercise in a lesbian separatist commune in Northern California.

"Your body turns into a gigantic sex act when you're having a child," she said, "Your breasts get bigger but so does your clit. I said to the doctor, 'Plug in the Hitachi wand and hand it to me.'"

Susie told of a friend who threw a lesbian orgy with 140 women. The friend complained that there was no space to have sex. ("That's

like a bad lesbian joke," said Susie. How much space do you need?)

"More gay men are long term in their relationships. Lesbians are the queens of serial monogamy," said Susie, warning of the dangers of falling into the 'Let's get married, let's get a cat' trap. "You can have great sex with assholes," she said.

Safer Sexpertise

Parts of her new book and a big part of Susie's talk focused on safe sex and AIDS. "Nobody knows anything about women and AIDS. The information is pathetic," said Bright. She added that the number one question is the safety of oral sex.

"Lesbians have been guilty of thinking of AIDS as a man's disease just like straights have been guilty of thinking of AIDS as a gay disease."

"The people who are in the biggest danger from sex, physically and psychologically, are people who can't talk, who can't communicate," she said.

Bright called safe sex an incentive to exercise the imagination. She said if a vaccine against HIV could be found tomorrow, we'd be wise to hang on to safe sex practises for other STDs. "Safe sex is here to stay."

And so is Susie Sexpert. She has lectured at Ivy League schools like Harvard and recently took her road show to Amherst College, Massachusetts, where she got physical threats. "A man called me and said, 'I did security for George Bush, and I'm doing security for you.'"

The Amherst experience was among Susie's stranger ones, the town being the stalwart, conservative penis it is. ("They've all been pussy-whipped by Andrea Dworkin.") Bright was taken to speak at, of all places, a church. "I gave them my most militant talk. Catholic areas don't seem to phase me. Must be that lesbian nun movement."

Susie spoke confidently of the healthy progress made by women speaking and writing freely on sex, especially when it leads to more suggestions. "I almost want to say 'yes' every time for positive reinforcement."

"Women taking sexual power just seems very down to earth to me."

Newswatch drug series brings streets home

by Kenneth King

Newswatch's viewers are being forced to come to grips with the reality of the drug scene in Montréal by a ten-part series the CBMT-6 news program has been airing nightly since Monday.

Entitled *Drug Wars*, it doesn't pull punches. Gritty, realistic portrayals of police busts, poignant interviews with drug addicts and the production crew's decision to stay away from bureaucrats make for an unnerving portrayal of Montréal.

The show's executive producer, Roch Magnan, says *Newswatch* wanted to make Montréalers realize that drugs are not relegated to small areas of the city but affect everyone, either through a friend or relative's addiction, or through crimes committed by addicts to support their habits.

Rather than have a reporter do over-voicing, the norm for documentaries, *Newswatch* chose to let the action and subjects speak for themselves. Individuals tell their own stories on camera in real-time - editing is kept to a minimum. This makes for somewhat slower action than most people will expect from a

newscast.

The same techniques were used in a previous series on health care in Québec, but to less effect. This was probably because most people have some shared point of reference with hospitals and doctors, but not with crack houses and drug dealers. The viewer is shocked into paying attention.

Instead of focusing on the police and the official 'war on drugs', CBC has portrayed the personal battles waged by individuals on the front lines. In the first episode, a narcotics officer provides most of the narration, allowing the viewer to see what he goes through each night. Unlike other documentaries about drugs, the police are not portrayed as an institution, but as individuals.

And it is made very clear that the police cannot cope with the drug scene: they estimate that only two to five per cent of the drug trade comes under police scrutiny.

Magnan said the series deliberately concentrated on coke, crack and heroin because they are the addictive drugs, the ones most likely to drive people to crime. And that is how most Montréalers will find themselves

connected to drugs in Montréal.

He cited statistics which say that, of all the women and men in provincial jails, 80 per cent of women and 50 per cent of men are there because of crimes related to intravenous drug use.

The drug scene has escalated incredibly over the last five years. The number of heroin addicts has at least tripled, going from 5000 to present estimates of 15 to 20 thousand. Two years ago, the police rarely saw a kilo of coke - now that amount comes in regularly from relatively small busts.

Newswatch has taken a bold step by portraying drugs, drugs users and the police in a different manner from the Hollywood approach. The police don't always make an arrest, the dealers aren't all members of ethnic minorities and the addicts aren't all lower-income youths.

Instead, the police acknowledge that they are doing no more than holding their ground, dealers are arrested in different areas of Montréal, and middle-class addicts are shown on-screen.

Newswatch will have a hard time creating

a segment more moving than that scheduled for tonight - an interview with an addict.

Ann, a heroin junkie, tells her own story in a way that no reporter could manage. The segment closes with a still of her face, and the viewer is left to deal with an overload of emotion and information.

Taking a leaf from Marshall MacLuhan, the producers have turned the medium into the message: people on screen do not seem like actors. Instead they are almost too real. Like well-acted disease of the week movies, viewers are drawn so far into their lives they have no emotion except that of their on-screen doppleganger.

The series is a good effort to bring basic information to viewers who have turned a blind eye to problems they saw as being those of the urban poor. To those with a basic knowledge of the drug culture in Montréal, the information may seem old, but few people do. Even the seasoned journalists involved with the project were shaken.

"It's probably going to shock people" Magnan said. "This series is bringing the street into your bedroom."

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Images put queer nation in context

by Karen Herland

The theme of the third annual lesbian and gay film and video festival, Image et Nation, has got to be context.

Most lesbian and gay filmgoers have come to terms with the fact that anytime their work is screened, from cinema to TV, it involves a certain amount of contextualizing.

Watch straight cinema and pick the character to identify with. Watch the two men look at each other across their respective female partners and fill in your own subtext. Reading between the frames is something many gays and lesbians learn to do early (maybe that's why so many of us get into Communications Studies).

So when you say you're going to put on a lesbian and gay film festival, what do you include? Films exclusively by lesbian and gay filmmakers about our lives? Films by anybody that represent our lives? Or films that we learned to read early for what they didn't come out and say?

"We're looking for films that make some kind of statement, it could be positive or negative, but in the context of all the other films, the negativity goes away.

"Anyway, we're not programming for one community. There are five thousand communities out there," said Anne Golden, one of the women's programmers on the all-volunteer staff that puts Image et Nation together.

Lesbian and gay cinema is best defined as that which interests us,

from how we might be perceived to how we choose to represent ourselves. So in the festival we get everything from Dorothy Arzner's 1933 Hollywood film Christopher Strong, featuring Katherine Hepburn in drag, to Meet Bradley Harrison Pickelsimer, an experimental documentary about a drag queen, by Heather McAdams.

Besides the obscure, there are retrospectives of work by German auteur Ulrike Ottinger, Guy Gilles, Collin Campbell and both major works by Richard Epstein (who will all be present). Epstein's two films, The Times of Harvey Milk and Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt, could be put in the category of gay films for straight audiences. They're the films you take your parents to.

The Been Around the World programme (I can't even write that without hearing her whiney voyoyoyce) explores homosexuality in different cultures. But, except for a few other titles scattered throughout the festival, the bulk of the programme remains predominantly white North American and European.

Within those limits, the selection is varied. Many of the films and videos deal with AIDS, but this time, at least seven of those are specifically about women. Women are also taking on their own sexuality (for a change). The Outlaw programme explores the topic in depth.

"There's more available this year, better quality and more choices," says Golden. "Women



STILL FROM A FILM BY ULRIKE OTTINGER

are finally comfortable putting their own bodies on the screens."

As women realize it's okay to make their sexuality public, the men's programme has less sex. "Men have always had access to porn," says Golden. They've also had access to more money, so their works tend to be less experimental, longer, more narrative.

Montréal women took on the two big events of the last year. Riposte: Crime Politique Contre les Femmes et les lesbiennes, comes almost a year after 14 women were massacred at the Polytech-

nique. More surprisingly, it was also local women who lifted up their cameras to document the clashes between gays, lesbians and the police around Sexgarage last July.

The quality and openness of the festival is a credit to the organizers, who don't see the kind of grant money most festivals have access to. The vast majority of the festival is pulled together on a kind of barter system — services exchanged for an ad in the programme.

Yet Image et Nation remains one of the most accessible of all of Montréal's many film fests. Tick-

ets range between \$2.50 to \$5 for any screening, and passes are available, too. What's more, this is the only festival I know of where you can pick up the programme absolutely free. So you don't need a degree in film history and prior knowledge of every director's work to get what you want.

The Festival opens tonight and runs until November 25 at the Goethe-Institute, NFB Cinema and the Cinéma-thèque Québécoise. Programs are available around town. For info call 521-5740.

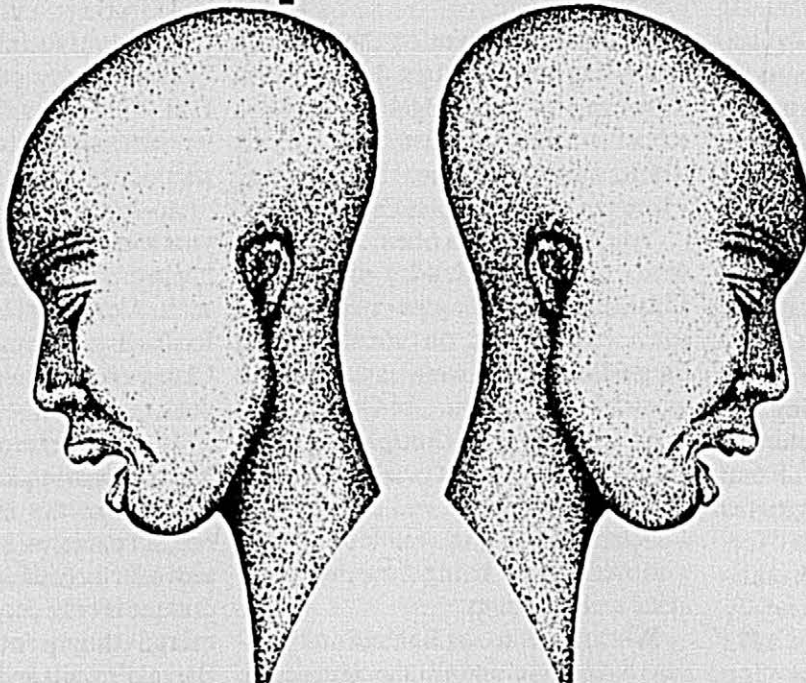
Black women speak out and celebrate

by Lina Saigol

The 90s have brought a new wave of voices speaking out against racism, sexism and discrimination. This nouveau-liberation works wonderfully when accepted and supported by the public.

The Collective of Black Women hopes to get that kind of reaction in Montréal by singing praises of who they are and what they stand for at a public festival. They are inviting the public to come and hear their positive voice.

This celebration, suitably called Speaking Out, is a day-long festival of black women's expression, including writing, visual arts, film and video. The festival will provide a forum for discussion around issues relevant to black women, as



producers of artistic forms.

The Collective formed last winter to research issues relevant to African women of the diaspora. One of the major projects they have instigated is the Bibliography Of Works By Black Women In Canada. This is exciting and encouraging considering how little has been written on the subject, worldwide.

They aim through Speaking Out to present features that cannot be quantified in their research projects.

The day will be constructive for those who can participate in a panel discussion, screenings of films, and writing workshops. The confirmed workshop facilitators are Ahdri Zhina Mandiela, a poet from

Toronto; Khadejha, a local artist educator; and Michelle Mohabeer, whose first exhibiton was Exposure.

This is a highly positive, dynamic and well-organized festival, and requires the support of the public. Speaking Out's sponsors include CKUT (Radio McGill), Studio D, Upfront Magazine and Black Communications Media. Come speak out among those who aren't afraid to.

The festival will be held on Sunday November 18, 1990, from 9h30 to 19h at Dawson College, 3040 Sherbrooke West, north of Atwater Metro. Food, art, t-shirts and books will be available and donations are welcome.

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Once more unto the Meech, dear friends

A Deal Undone: The Making and Breaking of the Meech Lake Accord
by Andrew Cohen

Douglas and McIntyre, 303 pp.

by Stephen Butler

Constitutions, Edmund Burke wrote, are born in violence and manipulation, and can't survive without a myth to preserve them — be it a Hobbesian 'social contract', a Rousseauian 'legislator', even 'two founding nations'.

Which raises a lot of questions about what's been happening in Canada for the last ten years. In 1982, a group of politicians sat down to write the constitution of a country that had existed *de facto* for over a century. They tried not only to describe its historical and sociological realities, but to plan the nation's future. They held public hearings and heard from countless committees.

But Brian Mulroney decided not to follow the same route when he began what many called the Québec Round in 1987. He isolated himself and the ten provincial premiers in a single room at Meech Lake with the express intention of bringing the prodigal province back into Confederation. The workings of this closed-door process are the focus of Andrew Cohen's new book, *A Deal Undone: The Making and Breaking of the Meech Lake Accord*.

Cohen is a journalist who has covered every major constitutional conference in Canada since 1980. Based on interviews with all the premiers and former premiers (with the exception of Mulroney, who wouldn't see him), as well as many constitutional experts and advisors, Cohen has reconstructed what happened out of the public eye during the three years it took the Accord to fall.

A Deal Undone does not purport to be political analysis. Cohen himself points out that journalism is merely the first draft of history — his book, he told the *Daily*, is "history on the run."

Nevertheless, the facts (if that is what Cohen has discovered, and it seems so) constitute a stinging indictment of the constitutional incompetence of the current government, the "white gentleman's club" that tried to decide the country's future without, as one advisor put it, "having every bloody interest group outside the door".

Sensationalist promotion — the inside cover calls it "a story of power, politics, and personality" — may be forgiven in light of its subject's current popularity (and the upcoming Christmas rush), but betrays the substantive nature of its findings.

To some extent, Cohen himself may be at fault. Bourassa's reference to "that bastard Trudeau" and subsequent "fuck you" to Clyde Wells feature prominently, while some of his more significant findings (such as a Québec advisor's suggestion his province considered immigration more important than the distinct society clause) are obscured.

He has also shuffled the discussion of Mulroney's excuse for the secrecy of the Meech process (that was how the Fathers of Confederation did it, he said) towards

the end of the book, which would have perhaps better served its purpose on page one.

It's a mistake, however, to think of *A Deal Undone* as just another series of anecdotes. Cohen also looks extensively at the political context in which the negotiations took place, and has revealed a fundamental failure in the democratic process.

Aside from complaints about the non-representative nature of the Meech process, Cohen has two essential themes. The first is an attack on the "collegial" nature of the "Premier's Club" — the pressure for conformity and acquiescence fostered by closed-door meetings and an unwritten code of behaviour. How, Cohen asks, can decisions affecting the future of a whole country be made under such conditions?

Secondly, he questions why Mulroney chose to re-start the "Constitutional Wars" in the first place. Nationalism was at a low ebb in 1986, the PQ had just been thrown out, and the constitution was the last thing on anybody's mind. Though Trudeau's boast that his Charter would last a thousand years was overly optimistic, Cohen claims, there seemed no reason why Canada couldn't at least have made it into the 90s before it had to deal with its constitution again.

Whatever weakness Cohen has as a reporter shows here. He is clearly a Trudeau Liberal, parroting both the former prime minister's defense of the first constitution and his criticisms of Meech. Cohen devotes a whole chapter to this "champion of rights" who came out of retirement to fight Meech, and describes him almost mythically. ("The eyes still engaged those who came under their steady gaze. The frame was strong and supple... the sex appeal endured.")

Later, this translates into a lionizing portrait of Clyde Wells, Trudeau's standard bearer throughout the debate. As the Meech deadline approaches, his initially objective account becomes decisively sympathetic to the Newfoundland premier. This is a function of his strong concern for the subject matter. "The country is in disastrous shape," he told the *Daily*, "If I were Trudeau, I would be more depressed than at any time in my career."

The book stops short of making any definitive statements about the future. It treats the internal divisions of the Liberal party at length, but virtually ignores Chrétien, McLaughlin and the New Democrats. Cohen attributed such omissions to lack of time, but spoke candidly of his pessimism. "Parliament in 1993 could conceivably be split five ways," he said, "Governing this country is going to become extremely difficult."

Despite these problems, *A Deal Undone* is well-researched and thoughtful, surprisingly so in view of how recent are the events it describes. It is the first of many books we may expect in the coming years on this crucial period in Canada's history — and one wonders how much more they will be able to uncover.



Site-specific art over brandy in Vieux Montréal: Cathy Quinn's "Who's at the Helm?" is projected on

You can't listen to

by Carl Wilson

You don't see him often: A skinny boy with jet black hair, staring and standing stock still. He looks untouched, almost perfect, but behind his eyes flashes a call to riskier wisdom.

If you touched him on the ear, he'd follow you home, all tight-lipped enthusiastic talk of his draughting course at school — until he ended up crouching shirtless on the kitchen floor, asking where you keep the knives and matches.

You don't see him often. But I saw a dozen of his kind Sunday night at the Einstürzende Neubauten concert. Their eyes were trained on vocalist Blixa Bargeld, and they were saying all the words along with him... in German.

Little wonder, though, because Bargeld seems he was once such a boy. Today he's grown up into a fine young asshole, and fallen in with a bad crowd who make their living battering sheet metal and ear drums.

Which is not to say Bargeld and company have left behind all interest in design and artifice. The band's name means *Collapsing New Buildings*, and amongst their works to date are *Strategies Against Architecture* (1984), *5 on the open-ended Richter Scale* (the 1987 title refers to the seismographic point at which new buildings collapse), and their latest, *Haus Der Lüge* (*House of Lies*).

But these "experiments in narrative architecture" focus on tearing down edifices instead of building new ones. And

the towers the group topples are songs. Neubauten attacks them from the ground up, with the very materials of construction — cast iron, corrugated pipe, power tools, two-by-fours, cement mixers, coiled springs — culled from the alleys and junkyards of their latest tour stop.

Last Sunday on the Spectrum stage, F.M. Einheit, looking like a Hungarian wrestler, applied sledgehammer to suspended fuel tank. N.U. Unruh played a proto-kyoto made of some wood, some wire and a green pepper canister, and then hopped over to the anvil and welding tools. Alexander Hacke's waves of guitar feedback and the melodic anchor of Marc Chung on bass overlaid the sound with punk memories.

It's a recipe for chaos, or was, until the band threw in sequenced drums and dance rhythms in the late 80s. But purists needn't panic, as Sunday's performance proved. Neubauten's "No Future" noise critique is only deepened by the computerized thump of media funk, and Bargeld's wails and gibbers of poetry and theory break the onslaught brilliantly.

Plus, the ensemble is 'order'-proof. Microphones, guitars and roadies were knocked asunder by Bargeld's spiderly stride, and the group seemed almost confused by the concept of an encore. Still, my favourite moment was Unruh's jam on the shopping cart, which he tumbled and batted about the stage with sticks and steel bars.

The low points of the evening were the

two intermissions the while the stage crew Neubauten's five-minute La La La Human combination of La L gymnastics and Neu grunge was neat, it was





PHOTO: NORMAND BLOUIN

screens on the Sun Life building.

my DNA

band had to take new prepared for aute collaboration Steps. While the a La's hazardous abauten's drastic n't worth the shat-

complimented the audience's patience, you got the feeling this wasn't his idea, but a dull artsy frill forced on the band by New Music America, the festival that sponsored their visit... kinda like the ritzy setting and the \$25 tickets.

Nevertheless, Neubauten transcended inconvenience and went straight to serious interference. When one audience member yelled, "No more muzak!" I couldn't tell if he was cheering or booing, but Bargeld was quick to respond.

"Muzak's good," he reasoned. "You can react to it. If 99 per cent of everything is crap, I don't have to listen to it, I can just react against it." (The crowd went wild—and Bargeld, taken aback, made a mocking bow to his idolators.)

Neubauten's psychological effect was best summed up by a story-song Bargeld growled out in English, about cutting his finger. "I ran into a musician friend, and showed him what I had. He said, 'But how are you going to listen to it?' And I said, 'You can't listen to that — that's my DNA!'"

Bargeld's right. You can't listen to DNA. And no matter how much Tiffany tries, you can't hear hormones, either. All you can hear is the sound of one thing hitting another thing, the harder the better. As Neubauten says, "No beauty without danger," — an erotic proposition for all skinny boys and girls.

It makes most music look like the rest of the modern world: a house of lies.

47 seconds at the helm

by Dan Robins

There's a caryatid staring out from the Sun Life Assurance Building in Old Montréal. It's the inspiration for a new site-specific film projection produced by Cathy Quinn.

Quinn says she was drawn to this stone female figure, and the way it blended into the building. She was particularly struck by its resemblance to a ship's figurehead, carved to promote good fortune in sea voyages.

Her 47 second film, called "Who's at the Helm?", uses the Sun Life building as its screen. It employs the image of the figurehead to explore attitudes towards women.

This is Quinn's second project of this nature; the first was in New York, where two other caryatids framed an oval window. "I was really drawn to them, and the idea of doing something in that window," she says.

But that was a year ago ("almost to the day"), and now she's doing it again in Montréal.

"Who's at the Helm?" is projected from behind onto screens in windows on either side of the Sun Life caryatid. Red

lights flash above to lure the unwary traveler.

The first image in the sequence is a nautical one — a National Film Board stock clip of a ship, with the caryatid centred, so as to appear as the figurehead — "the front of the ship, that's out to new frontiers," she says.

This also suggests a view of "a woman as a vessel" or as "a kind of territory as well." She says this is "an attitude the government has," specifically mentioning the proposed new abortion law.

In fact, "Who's at the Helm?" was originally to have been explicitly pro-choice. One of the images was going to be the inside of a fallopian tube.

But after seeing other struggles (such as those at Kahnawake and Kanasetake in the summer), "I just thought I'd like to broaden it a bit," Quinn says. So the fallopian sequence has been replaced by a chaotic view of bacterial propagation.

The final image is of a woman rowing, as she "grabs hold of the oars quite defiantly," and begins to row. After a short while, she breaks the symmetry, and starts to steer with only one oar.

After going through these three im-

ages, the film returns to its title sequence, and then repeats *ad infinitum*.

The film has no one message for the viewer, which Quinn says is very important for her. "What I really want to do with my work is to offer people space to work with it," she says.

"That's why I go out on the street, and deal with social and political issues. . . I think it's important for art to function in that way, [with] an openness in terms of interpretation."

Besides the site-specific films, she has done street performance, and did some video work in Halifax. This allows her to reach a different audience from theatre-going art patrons, she said.

Another of her site-specific works will be showing starting November 25 in Québec, contrasting a building's Art Nouveau style with the posters advertising XXX movies being shown at the cinema inside.

"Who's at the Helm?" runs at the Sun Life Building between 20h and 24h, until the 20th (so it's not really *ad infinitum*). All you've gotta do is walk down Notre-Dame ouest. Look for the flashing red lights at number 266.

Fringe fest budding in Mtl.

by Alex Poulis

This summer, Montréalers will get a chance to experience a homegrown version of North America's largest theatre event, when the first Montréal Fringe Festival is launched June 15 to 23.

An all-Canadian phenomenon, the fringe festival is a type of zany alternative theatre where "anything goes." And anyone can apply to take part, in any way s/he wants.

As co-producer Kristin Kierens explained, "The onus (in this festival) is on you the applicant. You can stand there for 10 minutes and do nothing, if you like."

Elaborating about the Fringe's success in its native Edmonton, Kierens said, "In Edmonton, people take their two weeks annual vacation to Fringe."

Co-producer Nick Morra and members of the English Suitcase Theatre Company also spoke about the Fringe to the Players' Theatre audience Tuesday night.

The bilingual festival will take place in five off-beat venues on St-Laurent, between Duluth and Avenue des Pins. Forty-five theatre companies will present 250 indoor performances from noon to midnight. Tickets will cost a maximum six dollars. And get this — all box office revenue goes directly to the artists.

The carnivalesque atmosphere will also have a beer tent and street performers (for example, jugglers).

Brian Paisley first brought the Fringe Festival to Edmonton nine years ago. Since then, its attendance has grown from 7 500 in 1982 to a surprising 310 000 last summer, making it North America's largest theatre event.

Fringe Festivals have sprung up in many Canadian cities. And none of them has ever experienced an attendance drop.

For those interested in participating, applications will be available January 15. Kierens also stressed that the Montréal

Fringe needs volunteers. So if you'd like to get free beer and free entertainment this summer, here's your chance.

Billy Budd

The English Suitcase Theatre Company, a favourite of Fringe Festivals across Canada, delivered a sample of what Fringe can be at its best in their adaptation of *Billy Budd* Tuesday night.

Herman Melville's novella, written shortly before his death in 1981, focuses on an allegorical struggle between good and evil. Billy Budd is a young British sailor whose innocence and honesty capture the hearts of his shipmates. John Claggart is a jealous petty officer aboard the same warship.

The conflict erupts because Budd's pleasant personality (and, critics have noted, homoerotic charms) bring out Claggart's deep-rooted hostility towards people.

The pivotal moment occurs when Claggart accuses Budd falsely of planning a mutiny. Since he has a severe, impeding stutter, Budd involuntarily expresses his "unspeakable" disgust with a fatal blow at Claggart.

Despite his innocent heart, Budd is court-martialled, tried and found guilty. He is hanged, but "lives on in the memories of the sailors that knew him."

Ben Dudley is aptly cast as Billy Budd. Kevin Williamson also comes across well as John Claggart, particularly when Budd strikes him. (Ironically, for someone who's just portrayed a bastard, Williams puts on a very convincing second performance as the chaplain who consoles Budd before he's hanged.)

The fifty-minute, four-actor drama is as taut as the ship's ropes. Not only because of the performances, but because the actors also serve as narrators and monologuists, to put the action in per-

spective.

Since July, English Suitcase has been performing *Billy Budd* in a variety of Fringe Festivals across Canada, along with their four-person version of *Macbeth*.

Billy Budd's one-week engagement continues till this Saturday at 20h at Players', 3480 McTavish, third floor. For ticket info and reservations, call 398-6813. For further information about the Montréal Fringe Festival, call 987-1774.



PHOTO: KEVIN WILLIAMSON

Ben Dudley flexes in *Billy Budd*.

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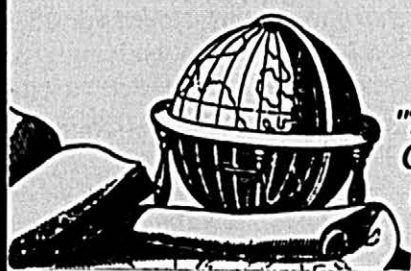
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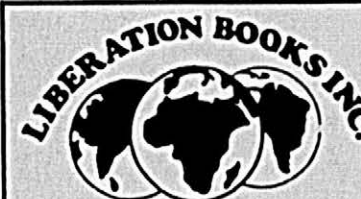
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 erroneously
 suggested that the
 series "Art of the State"
 would continue this
 week. As you can see, it
 does not. The second
 part of the series will
 appear next week, with
 a report on a panel
 discussion of popular
 music and state
 repression.

In later editions the
 series will include the
 announced piece on
 censorship in Canada,
 as well as a feature on
 Canadian hate
 literature legislation.
 Bet you can't wait.



NEW TITLES:

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- Banking on The Poor - The World Bank and World Poverty - Ayers
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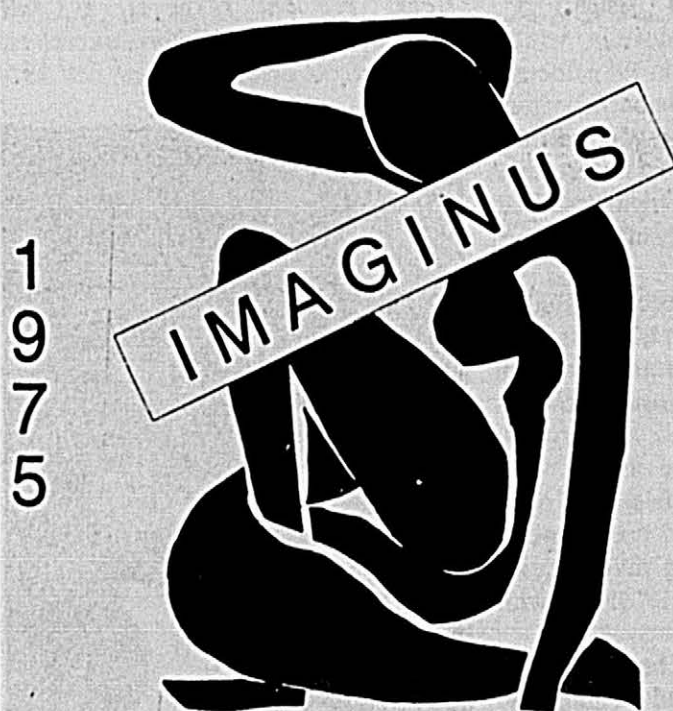
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McGill students: \$3.50 per day; \$2.50 for 3 consecutive days, \$2.25 for 4 or more consecutive days. McGill Faculty and Staff: \$4.50 per day. All others: \$5.00 per day. There is a 25 word limit. There will be a charge of 25¢ for each word over the limit. Boxed ads are available at \$4.00 per ad per day - no discounts on boxing.

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Brand new computers for sale: 286 - 386 - 486 - high resolution monitors. Financing available - Guaranteed best price #333-9033.

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372 - Lost and Found

Found: 1 pair of glasses in the Union cafeteria. Go to SSMU desk if you want to see again.

374 - Personals

Is your closet getting too small? Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers an information/counseling talkline. Call with questions, problems or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417 M-F, 7-10.

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385 - Notices

St. Martha's is a Christian community that meets every Sunday at 10:30 am 3521 University. Informal, dynamic, lots of discussion and fellowship. Everyone welcome! Info: 398-4104, Presbyterian-United Church Chaplaincy.

Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers information and counselling talkline. Call us with questions, problems or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417 M-F, 7-10.

Lesbian/Gay discussion group held Fridays at The Yellow Door Coffee House (3625 Aylmer) at 17:30.

Having problems with your landlord? Your employer? Are legal problems keeping you up at night? If you need help sorting out these problems & more call or drop by the McGill Legal Information Clinic - M to Fri 10-5 pm - 398-6792 - Rooms B20, B21 & B01B of the Student Union Building!

16mm animated film requires male and female voices, technical director, animation assistants, artists. Auditions, interviews Saturday, November 17th, Union 310, 14:00. Call McGill Film Society, 398-6825, 939-1058.

Iranian Student Association. Meeting Fri. 16th, Union Building Room 410.

Travel Club McGill offers you - 1 free trip to Killington this weekend Nov. 16-18. Recruit 6 members for our ski club to rm. 433 and the trip is yours. Deadline Fri. at 12:00 pm.

Gays and Lesbians of McGill Second Beer Garden tonight Room 425 Union from 7 pm - 10 pm. Beer \$2 Soft Drinks \$1. All welcome.

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Twistin' through madcap Madrid '82

by Anne Kuriakose

"How are you going to promote this movie?"

"... as one of the few opportunities that people will have to be safe for two hours."

- Pedro Almodovar, 1982

Don't believe him.

Labyrinth of Passion is Almodovar's 1982 farcical depiction of a frantic search for love in Madrid. (He later made *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, *Matador*, and *Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!*)

The madcap story includes a nymphomaniac rock'n'roller, her wanna-be dry cleaner, a perfectly coiffed, and until recently infertile, exiled Empress.

It also features a trio of Arab revolutionaries, including one with a highly developed sense of smell

which leads him back to his one-night stand and terrorist target, the ex-Emperor of Tyran's son, Riza Niro, and a slew of others who do their own thing in Madrid at break-neck speed.

Sexilia the nymphomaniac is the daughter of a biogynaecologist who developed artificial insemination because he feels there is something unnatural about the union of two bodies.

Ever since both her father and a friend rejected her on the sunny Costa del Sol when she was young, Sexilia has had an aversion to the sun and to monogamy, taking refuge in the arms of men as she did on the sand many years before, when she played "Husbands and Wives" with several boys at once.

Sexilia and her alter-ego Queti are each living alone with their fathers. Sexilia's mother died when she was very young and she has

since lived with her cold and clinical father. Queti's mother ran away with another man six months before, leaving Queti to be raped every other day by her father, who takes Impotens super-libidinizing drops with his tea.

For some reason (love?!?) Sexilia abandons her nymphomania in order to become the significant other of Prince Riza Niro who up to now has always liked other boys. But this is just the biggest strand amongst many others in the tangled plot web.

Almodovar uses the sun-as-destroyer image to great effect. Sexilia, in her weakest moment, is brutalized by a reflection of the sun's rays in the ex-Empress' compact mirror.

Almodovar develops his minor characters into fantastic creatures such as the gay porn star cum "renowned aesthetician sought af-

ter in Los Angeles, New York and Berlin." With fake blood smeared all over himself from the sadomasochistic sex-with-a-gouging-power-drill scene he's just filmed, he eagerly plans what hairstyle will adorn the head of Riza Niro, who wants a new image.

While seamlessly joining so many sub-plots, Almodovar leaves room for the occasional jolting gag like the record production secretary on the phone who protests, "I must go now. The laxative is starting to work." And promptly has an accident.

The camp is at its best during the concert scenes, when a glittering gay punk rock duo (including a cameo by Almodovar himself) screech about the joys of drugs and rats and love in the sewers.

Almodovar does not dwell on the sex acts (violent or not) of the film — they happen so fast and

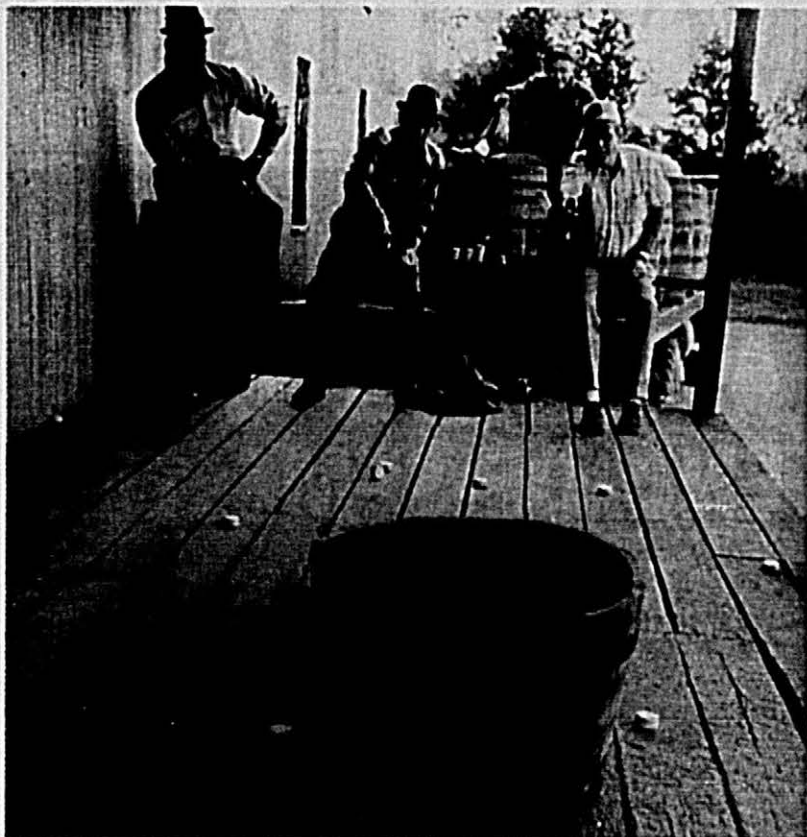
with such a lack of earnest intensity that the characters may as well have been shoveling snow.

He blends the sexual with the other elements of the film — class struggle, breakdown of family relations, the ubiquitous terrorists — to better comment on the social decay, the manic-depressive nature of modern Madrid. The sexual outrageousness can therefore be central to the film without overpowering the farce.

Labyrinth of Passion gushes forward through the glitter, sex and sleaze brilliantly and (with few exceptions) with razor-sharp wit. The storylines are linked together as the raw passion spirals toward the classic Almodovarian chase scene.

And yes, there is a happy ending.

Labyrinth of Passion - November 16-24 at the Rialto, 5723 Parc.



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EVENTS

Thursday 15 November

Center for the Study of Reproduction holds its 8th Annual Research Day in Leacock 232. 9h-17h.

"A Personal Journey" is the last lecture in the Voices of Native Women series. June Delisle, director of Kateri Memorial Hospital, Kahnawake, will speak at Wilson Hall. Bring your lunch. 13h-14h.

"Whistling Frogs and Associates: The Nightly Noises and Some Surprises" is a seminar by Heinrich Kaiser. Redpath Museum Auditorium. 15h.

Oxford's W.F. Madelung speaks on "Qur'anic Basis of Shi'ism" in Morrice Hall, Common Room. 16h.

Students for Global Responsibility are having an open general meeting in Union 410. Info: 284-6385. 17h.

"On The Waterfront" presented by the Film Society. FDA Auditorium. 19h30. Allegra Chamber Music Series. Works by Mozart, Triebensee and Beethoven. FREE. Redpath Hall. 20h.

"Rubber Dolly" continues. Tickets \$8.00 and \$5.00 at Sadie's. Morrice Hall Theatre, 3485 McTavish. 20h.

"The Hysterical Male" is a Grad Program in Communications Lecture by Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker. Arts W215. 20h30.

McGill Travel & Ski Club will give you a trip for 2 to Mount Killington (leaving tomorrow at 18h30) if you get 6 new members to Union 433 by tomorrow at 12h.

Friday 16 November

"Extreme Winter" is Warren Miller's ski movie and its being shown in Bronfman 151. Info: 398-6826. \$3.00 Ski Club members, \$5.00 non-members. 12h.

FREE organ music with John Stephenson. Redpath Hall. 12h15.

Armenian and Ukrainian students' associations are hosting a wine and cheese. Union 1078. Info: Nubar at 684-3215. 16h.

"Personal Services" presented by the Film Society. FDA Auditorium. 19h30. Hockey - McGill vs. Queen's. Winter Arena (behind Molson Stadium) 19h30. String and Mixed Ensembles perform works by Rorem and Haydn at Redpath Hall, 3462 McTavish. 20h.

TheatreSports. Improv comedy after "Billy Budd" at Players Theatre, Union, 3rd Floor. Info: 398-6813. \$1.00 or free with play.